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## STATISTICS OF PAUPERISM IN HARTFORD.

*Report of the Special Committee on Out-door Alms of the Town of Hartford, 1891.* Hartford. The Case, Lockwood & Brainard Company. 1891. Pp. lxxi, 93.

This report, with its trailing appendices and elaborate tables, is the result of a modest resolution calling for the appointment of a committee to confer with the selectmen in the matter of out-door alms. The committee explains that "in order to confer it was necessary that an opinion should have been formed. In order to form an opinion an examination into the facts of the case seemed necessary, and a cursory examination soon lead to the discovery that all the parts of the system of alms administration are so bound together that the examination of one part carries with it an examination of the whole."

The statistical portion of the report may be divided into two parts, first, that which gives a comparative view of the poor relief of various places and countries, and, second, that which sets forth the facts regarding the history and present extent of poor relief in the town of Hartford. The statistics of both sorts have been collected and arranged with a view to popular effect,—that is, with a view to the securing of certain definite reforms in the administration of poor relief in Hartford. And while this animus does not seem to have lead to any conscious concealment or misrepresentation of facts, it gives to the report something of the character of special pleading.

The tables giving a comparative view of the gross and *per capita* cost of poor relief in various places are planned to lead up to the conclusion that Hartford leads the old world as well as the new in the weight of the *per capita* burden imposed upon her by such relief. The facts to prove this are gathered from various secondary sources, such as H. C. White's "*Report to the Executive Committee of the Taxpayer's Association*, New Haven, 1886," *The Statesman's Year-Book*, *Annuario Statistico Italiano*, and Böhmert's *Armenwesen in 77 deutschen Städten*. The subject is a most complicated one, and the belief of the committee that the difference in *per capita* cost between Hartford and other American cities is so wide "that no theory of errors can possibly close it up" may be questioned. Within a single state comparisons between various communities can be made with a certain amount of accuracy, but even here one is apt to conclude that the place with which he is best acquainted expends the most for relief

work, because he knows all the items for that place, and is apt to be ignorant of some that should be included in the relief work of places at a distance. But between cities located in different states comparison is doubly difficult. The amount of the burden assumed by the state as a whole is a prime factor in comparing the burdens borne by the local political units. In some states all the pauper insane, blind, deaf and dumb, and feeble minded, and all dependent children, are provided for by the state at large. In others, all these classes are provided for by the counties, towns, or cities. One has only to glance at the Census Bulletin, which gives the classified expenditures of one hundred cities, in order to see that the amount said to be expended on charities depends not so much on the absolute burden of pauperism in the given community as upon the laws which regulate the relations of the city to the state and county in such matters. I have in mind a western city, about the size of Hartford, that spends next to nothing for charity, but it is because nearly all burdens of this character are imposed upon the county or the state at large.

When we come to comparing cities located in different countries, the quicksands are still deeper. Table II compares Hartford with fourteen cities and one "union" in various countries. Table III compares Hartford with twenty-four Italian communities, and Table IV compares Hartford with seventeen countries in Europe. The last mentioned table contains what I cannot but think a gross blunder, and its correction would negative an important assertion made on page viii of the report. The assertion is this: "In the British Isles, with a population of over 38,000,000, they spend \$1.07 [*per capita*] on an average (gross) on poor relief, while we spend \$1.96." Turning to Table IV, on which this statement is based, we find that the population of the three countries comprising the British Isles — England, including Wales, Ireland, and Scotland — amounts to 37,440,505; and the gross amount spent by the same countries for all forms of poor relief is \$112,406,630. This gives a *per capita* cost of \$3 02, which is 54 per cent greater than that for Hartford. The erroneous *per capita* for the British Isles, \$1.07, was obviously obtained by dividing the outlay for poor relief of the three countries, \$112,406,630, by the population of the whole seventeen countries included in the table, that is, by 104,957,034. The sweeping statement, therefore, that Hartford leads the old world as well as the new in the matter of poor relief cannot be correctly based even on the tables presented.

In the part of the report relating simply to local conditions the committee worked from original sources, and the results are of more value and must have contributed much more to the enlightenment of the selectmen. In thoroughness and in apparent fairness this part of the report is in every way admirable. The state chemist was asked to pass upon a list of articles that the poor had bought with grocery orders given by the selectmen, and gave it as his opinion that only about one-third of the total amount, \$732.54, had been expended for "articles of necessary support." The committee investigated 353 cases receiving out-door relief on January 1, 1891, and concluded that of this number 51 per cent needed no aid, 24 per cent should have been sent to the almshouse, and only 25 per cent were proper subjects for the sort of relief they were receiving. An interesting study was made of the inhabitants of the workhouse and the almshouse. Out of 149 males only 4 were believed to be temperate, and out of 80 females only 5 were believed to be temperate. The tables compiled from the police court records, especially those relating to re-arrests and recommitments, are of decided value.

Altogether it is much to be wished that every town meeting and every board of county commissioners might be served by a committee as intelligent and as thorough as this one.

A. G. WARNER.

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#### COMPARISON OF MOVEMENT OF POPULATION IN PRUSSIA AND FRANCE.

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The following is based upon material published in the *Zeitschrift des Königes Preussischen Statistischen Bureaus*. 1891. Nos. 1-2.

A comparison of the increase of population in France and Prussia is important in view of the unfriendly relations now existing between these two countries. The increase of births over deaths in France in 1889 was 85,962, and in Prussia 411,785, or nearly five times as great. In comparing these figures it must be remembered that France has a population of 38 millions while that of Prussia is only 29 millions. The population of France in 1889 increased 2.3 per 1000, and in Prussia 14.2 per 1000. The birth rate per thousand is 23.2 in France, and 37.7 in Prussia.